

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

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April 19, 2010

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.
Director of Mental Health

SUBJECT: **ADVANCE NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO RENEW A SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT NEGOTIATION WITH MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY SERVICES, INC.**

This memo is to comply with the Board of Supervisors Policy Manual, Section 5.100 Sole Source Contracts. It is the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's (DMH) intent to enter into sole source contract agreement with Mental Health Advocacy Services, Inc. (MHAS), located at 3255 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 902, Los Angeles, California 90010.

MHAS is a non-profit organization providing legal services to people with mental and developmental disabilities. MHAS' Government Benefits Advocacy Project provides a critical, irreplaceable service to Los Angeles County (LAC) residents by assisting severely and persistently mentally ill adults with applying for and maintaining Social Security Income (SSI) and/or Medi-Cal benefits through their established reputable expertise and protocols for facilitating the filing and processing of SSI and/or Medi-Cal applications resulting in quick approval of benefits. Now in its 13th year, this innovative project, which currently serves 600 new applicants each year, has helped over 4,600 adult consumers served by DMH obtain SSI and/or Medi-Cal benefits. In addition to the individual benefits advocacy, MHAS provides expert technical assistance and training to County agencies and other providers.

MHAS is uniquely qualified to provide the services needed as the combination of expertise and program design at MHAS has led to outstanding outcomes that would be difficult for another organization to match; MHAS has a success rate of over 80% in helping clients acquire benefits compared to an overall success rate of 50% nationally. The learning curve for another provider would be more expensive and the disruption of services would have a costly, negative impact on consumers due to increased risks of homelessness, hospitalization, or incarceration during the period. For every consumer that MHAS helps successfully qualify for benefits, DMH receives substantial reimbursements from Medi-Cal for the services provided. We estimate that in 2010, the total value of SSI and Medi-Cal benefits that will be received by the project's

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consumers will be close to \$50 million. Furthermore, other County departments such as Department of Health Services (DHS) and Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) who work with the same population, will also gain from the services provided by MHAS.

The sole source contract agreement will be for a term of three Fiscal Years (FYs), 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013. The contract will be funded with Sales Tax Realignment (CGF) in the amount of \$404,900 for each FY.

Unless otherwise instructed by a Board office within two (2) weeks, DMH will proceed with negotiating the sole source contract. DMH will work closely with both the Office of the County Counsel and the Chief Executive Office in renewing the current contract with MHAS.

MJS:OK:PM:cb

c: Health Deputies
Chief Executive Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Robin Kay, Ph.D.
Olivia Celis